

## Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, PA

SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON PARAGUAY

1. NEW YORK TIMES CARRIED ARTICLE BY JONATHAN KANDELL, JANUARY 21, IN PROMINENT POSITION, PAGE TWO OF FIRST SECTION. FULL ARTICLE BEING POUCHED. FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS:

2. BEGIN QUOTE: LATIN AMERICA'S MOST DURABLE DICTATORSHIP HAS LASTED SO LONG THAT MOST PARAGUAYANS WERE NOT EVEN BORN WHEN GEN. ALFREDO STROESSNER TOOK POWER.....BUT SINCE TAKING POWER IN 1954, GENERAL STROESSNER HAS CONTINUALLY RE-PRESSED EVEN MODERATE VOICES OF DISSENT AND PRESIDING OVER AN EXODUS OF ALMOST A MILLION POVERTY-STRICKEN PARAGUAYANS. ...ALTHOUGH MILITARY GOVERNMENTS ARE NOW THE RULE THROUGHOUT THE HEMISPHERE, THE STROESSNER REGIME RESEMBLES MORE CLOSELY THE PERSONALIZED, FEUDALISTIC DICTATORSHIPS OF A BYGONE ERA....THE COUNTRY DOES HAVE A CONSTITUTION THAT SPELLS OUT DEMOCRATIC GUARANTEES. THE PRESS OCCASIONALLY PUBLISHES ARTICLES CRITICAL OF THE REGIME'S CONDUCT. OPPOSITION SLATES APPEAR IN ELECTIONS EVEN IF THEY ARE WON

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BY GENERAL STROESSNER AND HIS COLORADOS BY SUSPICIOUSLY

LOPSIDED 80 PERCENT MAJORITIES THAT ALWAYS SPARK CHARGES OF FRAUD. A LEGISLATURE MEETS AND MINORITY CONGRESSMEN OFTEN HEATEDLY DENOUNCE GOVERNMENT ACTIONS...BUT THERE IS A CATCH. EVER SINCE GENERAL STROESSNER TOOK POWER, THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN IN A CONSTANT STATE OF SIEGE, UNDER WHICH ALL CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES ARE SUSPENDED....JUSTICE IS OFTEN METED OUT BY THE UBIQUITOUS SECRET POLICE--KNOWN AS 'PYRAGUES,' MEANING PEOPLE WITH HAIRY FEET...THE PRESIDENT OF THE SMALL, MODERATE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY RECENTLY CELEBRATED HIS RELEASE AFTER HIS ONE HUNDREDTH DETENTION...IMPRISONMENT AND TORTURE SEEM TO BE THE CREDENTIALS OF MOST OPPOSITION PARTY LEADERS. CARMEN LARA CASTRO, A CONGRESSWOMAN AND PRESIDENT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, HAS BEEN IMPRISONED, AND HER HUSBAND AS WELL. THEIR SON WAS TORTURED. I WAS A PRISONER 19 TIMES AND I WAS TORTURED SIX TIMES," SAID SENATOR CARLOS LEVI RUFINELLI, A LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY, A CONSERVATIVE GROUP.....REPRESSION IN PARAGUAY COMES IN WAVES, SOMETIMES REACHING HIGH TIDE, SOMETIMES RECEDING. IN RECENT WEEKS...DETENTIONS HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS AND CHARGES OF BRUTALITY WIDESPREAD. ACCORDING TO MRS. LARA CASTRO, ABOUT 200 PEOPLE ARE UNDER DETENTION FOR POLITICAL REASONS, AND SEVERAL HUNDRED MORE WERE JAILED BRIEFLY..... IN HIS LAST CHRISTMAS MESSAGE, THE ARCHBISHOP OF ASUNCION, THE MOST REV. ISMAEL ROLON, DENOUNCED 'THE USE OF TORTURE AS THE NORMAL METHOD OF EXTRACTING CONFESSIONS..... THE ARCHBISHOP'S CHARGES MAY HAVE MARKED THE BEGINNING OF ANOTHER PERIOD OF STRAINED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE GOVERNMENT. END QUOTE. INGERSOLL

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